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CONFIDENTIAL SECTION 01 OF 02 JEDDAH 01305

DEPARTMENT FOR INR/B
LONDON FOR JOHNSON
CENTCOM FOR POLAD

E.O. 12356: DECL OADR
TAGS: KISL PGOV PINR SA
SUBJECT: THE KINGDOM'S LEADING "RELIGIOUS REFORMERS"

REF: (A) 92 JEDDAH 192, (B) 92 JEDDAH 279, (C) 92 JEDDAH 607, (D) 92 RIYADH 4210

¶1. CONFIDENTIAL ENTIRE TEXT.

¶2. THE AWAKENING, OR "AS-SAHWAH" AS IT IS KNOWN IN ARABIC, IS THE GENERAL TERM USED TO DESCRIBE THE CONSERVATIVE RELIGIOUS TREND WHICH GAINED STRENGTH IN SAUDI ARABIA FOLLOWING OPERATION DESERT STORM. IT HAS REMAINED A LOOSELY STRUCTURED MOVEMENT WITHOUT FORMAL ORGANIZATION OR A LEADERSHIP HIERARCHY. POL/ECON OFFICER RECENTLY ASKED TWO YOUNG SHARI'A COURT LAWYERS FOR THEIR LIST OF THE AWAKENING'S MOST IMPORTANT LEADERS. WHILE TRAINED AT MAKKAH'S UM AL-QURA ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY, THESE TWO CONTACTS WOULD NOT DESCRIBE THEMSELVES AS RELIGIOUS ACTIVISTS.

¶3. OUR CONTACTS CHARACTERIZED THOSE THEY NAMED AS THE MOST INFLUENTIAL "RADICAL SALAFIYEEN". "SALAFIYEEN" IS A TERM WHICH DESCRIBES THOSE WHO WISH TO RETURN TO THE WAYS OF THEIR ANCESTORS. AS USED BY OUR CONTACTS, IT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH THE SALAFIYYAH MOVEMENT FOUNDED BY JAMAL AL-DIN AL-AFGHANI AND MOHAMMAD ABDUH IN EGYPT AT THE TURN OF THE CENTURY. WE HAVE TRANSLATED IT AS "REFORMERS" SINCE THE ARABIC LACKS THE NEGATIVE CONNOTATIONS ASSOCIATED WITH REACTIONARIES. THESE REFORMERS ARE REPORTEDLY MOSTLY YOUNG, INTERESTED IN CURRENT EVENTS AND MORE STRICT IN THEIR RELIGIOUS INTERPRETATIONS THAN TRADITIONAL RELIGIOUS LEADERS SUCH AS ABDULAZIZ BIN BAZ. THOSE WHO PREACH ARE REPORTEDLY WELL KNOWN FOR THEIR "FIERY SERMONS".

¶4. THE LIST OUR CONTACTS PROVIDED IS INTERESTING FOR SEVERAL REASONS. FIRST, THEY PROVIDED 16 NAMES, WITH BIO DATA FOR EACH, DIRECTLY FROM THEIR GENERAL KNOWLEDGE. THUS, WHILE THESE RELIGIOUS ACTIVISTS MAY NOT BE HOUSEHOLD NAMES, THEY FORM A WELL KNOWN AND RECOGNIZABLE GROUP IN THE MINDS OF THESE TWO LAWYERS. MOST ARE ON THE FACULTIES OF THE KINGDOM'S RELIGIOUS UNIVERSITIES, PARTICULARLY IN RIYADH. NONE ARE FROM THE EASTERN PROVINCE. MOST OF THOSE ASSOCIATED WITH THE RECENT "COMMITTEE FOR THE DEFENSE OF LEGITIMATE RIGHTS", INCLUDING ITS SIX FOUNDERS, WERE NOT MENTIONED.

¶5. MANY, BUT NOT ALL, OF THOSE NAMED SIGNED LAST YEAR'S MEMORANDUM OF ADVICE (MOA) TO THE KING. THE MEMORANDUM OF ADVICE OUTLINED PROPOSALS FOR A MORE ISLAMICLY CORRECT SAUDI ARABIA AND IS THE CLOSEST THING THE AWAKENING HAS PRODUCED TO A MANIFESTO. NOT SIGNING IT, HOWEVER, DOES NOT APPEAR TO EXCLUDE ONE FROM BEING CONSIDERED AN IMPORTANT RELIGIOUS REFORMER.

¶6. FINALLY AND PERHAPS MOST IMPORTANTLY, THIS LENGTHY LIST AND OUR CONTACTS' RELATED COMMENTS INDICATE THAT THE AWAKENING HAS NOT YET PRODUCED A SINGLE, RECOGNIZED NATIONAL LEADER. THERE IS NO SAUDI KHOMEINI.

¶7. THE LIST OF RELIGIOUS REFORMERS FOLLOWS:

SAFFAR BIN ABD AL-RAHMAN AL-HAWALI: FACULTY MEMBER AT UM

AL-QURA UNIVERSITY IN MAKKAH, SIGNED THE MEMORANDUM OF ADVICE (MOA).

NASSIR BIN SALMAN AL-AMR: FACULTY MEMBER AT IMMAM MOHAMMAD BIN SAUD UNIVERSITY IN RIYADH.

SALMAN BIN FAHD AL-AWDAH: FACULTY MEMBER AT IMMAM MOHAMMAD BIN SAUD UNIVERSITY, QASSIM BRANCH, SIGNED THE MOA.

DR. AIDH BIN ABDULLAH AL-QURNI: FORMER FACULTY MEMBER OF IMMAM MOHAMMAD BIN SAUD UNIVERSITY, ABHA BRANCH, SIGNED THE MOA. NOW LIVING IN RIYADH.

DR. SAAD AL-FAQIH: FACULTY MEMBER AT KING SAUD UNIVERSITY IN RIYADH, DEPARTMENT OF MEDICINE. HE IS A SUPPORTER OF THE COMMITTEE FOR THE DEFENSE OF LEGITIMATE RIGHTS (CDLR) WHO JOINED THE MAY 11 MEETING BETWEEN POLOFFS AND CDLR CO-FOUNDER ABDULLAH AL-MASARI AND CDLR SPOKESMAN MOHAMMAD AL-MASARI. HE SIGNED THE MOA.

DR. SALIH AL-WUHEIBI: FACULTY MEMBER AT KING SAUD UNIVERSITY IN RIYADH, ARABIC LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT, SIGNED THE MOA.

DR. NASSER BIN SAAD AL-RASHID: FACULTY MEMBER AT KING SAUD UNIVERSITY IN RIYADH, DEPARTMENT OF LITERATURE AND ARABIC LANGUAGE, SIGNED THE MOA.

SAMIR KHALIL AL-MALKI: IMMAM AND PREACHER IN MAKKAH.

DR. SAID MUBARAK ZU'AIR: FACULTY MEMBER AT MOHAMMAD BIN SAUD UNIVERSITY RIYADH, SIGNED THE MOA.

DR. ABD AL-WAHAB BIN NASSER AL-TURAYIR: FACULTY MEMBER AT IMMAM MOHAMMAD BIN SAUD UNIVERSITY. IMMAM AT THE KING ABDULAZIZ MOSQUE IN RIYADH, SIGNED THE MOA.

DR. AHMAD BIN OTHMAN AL-TUWAIJARI: FORMER DEAN OF EDUCATION KING SAUD UNIVERSITY IN RIYADH. RETIRED UNDER PRESSURE IN APRIL 1992.

NASSER BIN ABDULLAH AL-MUHAWIZ: DEAN OF THE FACULTY OF ENGINEERING, KING SAUD UNIVERSITY RIYADH.

ABDULLAH AL-BARAK: FACULTY MEMBER AT IMMAM MOHAMMAD BIN SAUD UNIVERSITY IN RIYADH.

ADIL AL-KALBANI: FORMER IMMAM OF THE KING KHALID MOSQUE IN RIYADH, HAS BEEN ARRESTED SEVERAL TIMES FOR ANTI-GOVERNMENT SERMONS.

DR. SALIH FAWZAN AL-FAWZAN: FACULTY MEMBER AT IMMAM MOHAMMAD BIN SAUD UNIVERSITY IN RIYADH. A MEMBER OF THE SUPREME COUNCIL OF ULEMA. HE WAS THE ONLY MEMBER OF THE COUNCIL TO SIGN THE 1991 POST-DESERT STORM REFORM PETITION. HE THEN SIGNED THE ULEMA'S DENUNCIATION OF THIS PETITION AND HAS TOED THE GOVERNMENT LINE SINCE. HE DENOUNCED THE "COMMITTEE FOR THE DEFENSE OF LEGITIMATE RIGHTS".

AWAD BIN MOHAMMAD AL-QURNI: FACULTY MEMBER AT MOHAMMAD BIN SAUD UNIVERSITY ABHA BRANCH, SIGNED THE MOA.

HAMBLEY